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Trinity College, "Trinity College Bulletin, October 1918 (Report of the President)" (1918). *Trinity College Bulletin*. Book 69.
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VOLUME XV

NEW SERIES

NUMBER 4

Trinity College Bulletin



Reports
of
The President, The Treasurer,
and
The Librarian



HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

October, 1918

TRINITY COLLEGE BULLETIN

Issued quarterly by the College. Entered January 12, 1904, at Hartford, Conn., as second class matter, under the Act of Congress of July 16, 1894. The Bulletin includes in its issues: the College Catalogue, Reports of the President, Treasurer, and Librarian; Announcements and Circulars of Information.

Trinity College

Report of The President

October, 1918



Hartford
Printed for the College
1918



PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Hartford, Conn., October 14, 1918.

To the Trustees of Trinity College:—

Hartford,

Connecticut.

Gentlemen:—

Yet again the first paragraph of my report must chronicle officially the death of one of our members. William Henry Vibbert, D. D., of the Class of 1858, since 1893 a member of our Board, has joined the great majority. The college has lost a loyal son. The Trustees have lost an able adviser, and, to the extent of his means, a generous contributor to our welfare. Time works many changes in a group like our own. Of the twenty-three trustees who honored me by election to my present office only nine still meet with us. Of the remaining fourteen four are living and ten are deceased.

The academic year which closed on the 16th of June last was a very difficult one and marked by a constant diminution of numbers, which seemed to threaten us with the necessity of closing our doors until peace should return. All through the year men went out, singly and in groups, to take their places on the firing line or in the various camps scattered about the country. It was necessary to reduce the Faculty to its smallest working number. Through the practice of rigid economy, ably administered by the Treasurer, we were enabled to finish the year with a much smaller deficit than had been anticipated. The book deficit was \$7,331.21. We had on hand from several over-subscriptions to the 1916-17 deficit the sum of \$1,005.35 and we were entitled to the second payment on the late Professor Ferguson's donation for this purpose, amounting to \$2,500. The deficit to be provided for, therefore, was \$3,825.86. I am glad to tell you that by subscriptions from members of our own body this has been met within twenty-one dollars. It should be borne in mind, however, that we received last year

an unexpected gift of \$5,000.00 from Mr. Morgan, who sent it to us by mistake, and let us keep it out of generous good will.

Aside from the constant anxiety and the depression growing out of these conditions, which the whole college body felt, there was nothing in the year's work to distinguish it from any other year. On the whole the students studied less earnestly than in some former times. Doubtless also their teachers were preoccupied and uneasy.

You will all remember that our Commencement was exceedingly brilliant. Its success was so great that I am moved to suggest that a similar plan be followed in coming years—at least until there shall appear some reason for making a change. It is unlikely that we can always have with us men of the eminence of Colonel Roosevelt and Doctor Pepper, to say nothing of the other well-known men who, by their presence, shed distinction upon the college. But that we should do away with the crude addresses of undergraduates, substituting therefor some timely message from a man who speaks with the authority of recognized achievement, seems to me most desirable.

Thus far I have been speaking of last year. In my mind it seems as if that were back in the 18th century. So much has taken place this summer and the College has been so completely revolutionized that we are really an entirely different kind of an institution. It was late in August that what is now known as the Students Army Training Corps was definitely announced by authority as a part of the military policy of the United States. The bill extending the age of men liable to draft was passed about the first of September. On September 3 and 4 I was present in Plattsburg at a Conference where some 350 colleges were represented, and we were addressed by members of the Committee on Education and Special Training established by the War Department. As a result of this conference I was able to return to Hartford with a fairly consistent scheme for organizing the Trinity unit. The plans formulated at Plattsburg have been many times changed and there have been many difficulties growing out of the attempt to do in two weeks an entirely new thing, the preparation for which might well have consumed six months.

As it exists today the S. A. T. C. is organized as follows: all the students between eighteen and twenty-one who are physically fit have joined the Students Army Training Corps. Thereby they have become private soldiers in the Army of the United States, subject to military discipline in all respects. Furthermore the Corps includes also certain men (some of them over twenty-one) who have been put in a deferred class by their draft board, but are recommended as suitable candidates for special service.

Yet again students under eighteen years of age are allowed to "enroll." Those who have done so at Trinity have signed a paper by which they voluntarily submit themselves to the same military discipline as the members of the Corps. The Government pays for the board, room-rent, and tuition of the members of the Corps, and also pays each member \$30.00 a month. They pay nothing for the men under eighteen years of age. These men defray their own expenses. The Corps has eleven hours a week of strictly military training, including their drills. They have 42 hours a week study and recitation, the study being carried on at prescribed hours at which times they are restricted to their quarters or to the Library. It is obvious that this has changed entirely the whole college life as we have hitherto known it. It has been an inspiring experience to me to see how loyally and conscientiously the young men accept these conditions, which, as compared with what they had some right to expect in college life, are exceedingly onerous and burdensome.

The changes in our college buildings made necessary by the introduction of military training have been many. The old dining room which the older trustees will recall, has been fitted up as a mess-hall, and a new, modern kitchen has been installed in the basement just to the north of it. The making of these changes within two weeks, which Mr. Waterman was able to effect, I think is a really remarkable accomplishment, and I invite you to inspect the result.

Through the report of the Executive Committee you will learn that the College has also undertaken to equip the whole line of buildings with electric lights, and, as required by the Government inspectors, with a large number of shower baths. This will involve the college in a very considerable expense, and I do not think the Government could fairly be asked to pay any part of it; as these are permanent improvements and have long been needed. The expense of the kitchen and mess-hall I do expect the Government to defray. The permanent contract between the Government and the College has not yet been drawn up nor submitted for signatures. We are working now under a temporary contract. The Government, however, has obligated itself to make a permanent contract in the near future, and especially to see to it that the colleges shall not lose anything financially through the militarizing of their curriculum.

I do not believe at all that the present system of military training will persist after peace comes; but I do believe, and I certainly hope, that so much of it will survive as to make a definite, thorough military training from henceforth a part of the courses at every American College. And because the

colleges are to turn out officers, and because the officers must have privates to command, I see some form of universal military training as a likelihood for all of our young men. Whether this shall come through training in school or through the calling into regular service for a year or two of young men not in college is, of course, a matter for conjecture. Again, I think the college curriculum will be changed in the vocational direction; but I have expressed my views so often on this subject to the Trustees that I will not enter upon it now. Also the colleges, and more particularly the schools, will, I think, hereafter give more attention to correct American History, to American Government, and to such other studies as tend most directly toward making an intelligent, educated citizen. I have been distressed several times this summer when young men have presented themselves for admission to Trinity College, bringing the diplomas of excellent high schools, and yet on their record it appeared that they had never had a word of American History taught them, at least not since their grade school days. Many a man has been graduated from Trinity College who has not had in that college any definite study of American History. I believe this to be an evil that should be remedied.

Turning from these conjectures and prophecies, however, back to our immediate concern, the Trustees should understand that the men who are here taking college studies and drilling in our military companies are, so far as discipline is concerned, entirely under the charge of the military authorities. Our staff at present consists of Colonel Calvin D. Cowles, U. S. A. Retired, Commandant, and four 2nd Lieutenants sent here by the Government to assist him. These students moreover have not all by any means been admitted to the College in the ordinary sense of these words. The Government required for admission to the S. A. T. C. that candidates should be graduates of an approved high school or that they should have received an equivalent education. At first we undertook to insist upon our regular standards of admission, but we found that practically all the other colleges, with Harvard as a conspicuous example, were making a distinction between admission to college and admission to the S. A. T. C. We, therefore, felt ourselves constrained to take the same course and there are a very considerable number of men on our rolls who have not qualified by our standards for admission to the Freshman Class. If they succeed in doing well with college studies the fact will show that our standards for admission were too narrow. If they do not the reverse will appear. It is the purpose of the Government to draft from the colleges on January 1, 1919, all the S. A. T. C. men who were twenty years of age when they entered,

and on April 1, 1919, all the men who were nineteen years of age when they entered. The men eighteen years of age will stay through the college year. As each of these groups is withdrawn the Government proposes to send us an equal number of qualified men to take their places. Under instructions from the Government we have also been obliged to dispense with our two-term schedule, and the year is divided into three terms: one ending December 21, one ending March 31, and one ending June 21. The assignment of this latter date will necessarily change the time of our Commencement. There are on our rolls at present 201 students, of whom 172 are in the military organization, the remaining 29 being civilian students in attendance under the old conditions. An important disciplinary question is likely to arise. The Government will not compel its soldiers to attend Prayers or to attend Church on Sunday. The College requires its students to do so and punishes them if they do not. Now if we try to send away from college a man whose irregularity in Church or Chapel is excessive, what will the War Department think? What will they say? What will they do? These questions trouble me and they are surcharged with unpleasantness.

I ask the Trustees to consider this matter. Should we make religious services voluntary? At present the attendance in the Chapel is excellent but it may not remain so. Moreover we have in residence representatives of an extraordinary number of varieties of religion—some of them hostile to others. And we have men of no organized religion.

Orders and plans change very rapidly. I am writing this on October 7th and it may be that I shall have to modify a great deal of what I have written before the time that it is to be presented to you, but I am proud that the College has been permitted to take its share in the great work of making officers who are to help win the war, and I know that whatever mistakes in detail may have been made this Board of Trustees is a unit in offering to our country the use of everything that we have at Trinity College.

Respectfully submitted

F. S. LUTHER,

President.

